



CARES Plus Update

CLASS Observation

Q. Why were only pre-k participants chosen for CLASS observations this year?

A. The CLASS Observation tool is currently designed for pre-k participants only. However, the CLASS Observation tool for toddlers will be available for Year 2 of CARES Plus. Next year's random sample will include both pre-k and toddler participants. The CLASS observation tool for infants is currently in the developmental stage.

Q. My county is a small county, yet the number of participants in my county chosen for a CLASS observation is higher than that of other counties. Please explain the selection process.

A. Teachstone Inc. performed the random selection process. Based on their expertise, the sample was *stratified by county*. *Stratified by county* means the percentage of participants chosen for a CLASS observation from each county mirrors the percentage of participants in that county (excluding all MTP participants). If a county submits 5% of all of the non-MTP participants in the state, then participants from that county would make up 5% of the group selected to be observed using CLASS. While the numbers may seem higher than anticipated, there are several things to consider: only pre-k participants were part of the sample, and the total number of participants in the program statewide is less than anticipated.

The candidate pool of eligible CLASS participants for this year is 1696. (1696 participants are pre-k participants and are not part of MTP). Different counties submitted different percentages of participants. Some counties submitted large numbers to participate in CLASS. Those counties will have more classrooms selected to be observed. The goal of the selection is that the percentage of candidates to be observed reflect the percentage participating. Some counties submitted fewer people, and they will have fewer people randomly selected for observation. The entire observation sample mirrors the entire group of 1696 participants in terms of percentages contributed by each county.

Q. Can a participant chosen for a CLASS observation decline to be observed?

No, if a participant declines to be observed, they can no longer participate in CARES Plus. However, if a participant **through no fault** of their own is not permitted to be observed, that participant could be exempt from the CLASS observation. However, this situation must be documented by the Lead Agency and submitted in writing to First 5 California at CARESPlus@ccfc.ca.gov. Please refer to the CLASS protocol for Lead Agencies posted on the CARES Plus implementation page on the First 5 California web page (www.ccfc.ca.gov).

Q. If a participant chosen for CLASS is unable to participate **through no fault** of their own or has left the program, will I be given the name of another participant from my county to contact?

No. The goal of the CLASS observation process is to complete all observations during the same week, so due to time constraints, this will not occur this year.

Q. Please let me know if the following CLASS notification process is correct.

- Contact the participant and let them know that they have been selected for the CLASS observation and inform them that they will receive a camera kit and instructions in approximately 2 weeks.
- Confirm the mailing address and other contact information of the selected participants and send to Michelle Kinner at CDTC.
- Contact the center director or family child care owner/operator and inform them that a staff member has been selected for a CLASS observation.
- Provide them with the **Video Recording Notification** form for parents.
- Share the **What to Expect from a CLASS Observation** sheet.
- If the director/owner does not agree to allow the video recording to take place on site, then immediately inform First 5 California and Michelle Kinner in writing the reason the participant is unable to the CLASS observation.

A. Yes, you understand the process completely. Please refer to the Lead Agency Video recording protocol on the CARES Plus Implementation page.

Q. One of my participants chosen for the CLASS is a family child care provider. Is that candidate eligible?

A. Yes. Teachstone Inc. has a family child care video recording protocol that all of the CLASS observers will be trained on prior to performing the CLASS observation. As long as this provider works with preschool age children, he/she is required to complete the CLASS observation.

Q. When will the CLASS Participants receive feedback regarding the CLASS Observation?

A. First 5 California is working with Teachstone, Inc. to determine the best manner to provide feedback to CLASS participants. A feedback method should be developed by the middle of November 2011 and participants should begin to receive feedback in December 2011.